



BELTEX SHEEP SOCIETY

LAMBING TIME FIRST AID CUPBOARD



Be prepared for the lambing season and take time to take to look over and stock up or re-stock the first aid cupboard

- Lubricant e.g. Lubrel
- Arm length polygloves
- Head noose..I prefer the wire type as they take up less room in the pelvis
- Lambing cords/ropes
- Lamb stomach tube and syringe
- Colostrum substitute powder / frozen colostrum in 200 ml lots
- Antibiotic injections e.g L.A. penicillin and terramycin
- Antibiotic oral dose for lambs e.g. Spectam
- Antibiotic eye cream
- 20% calcium /magnesium injection
- Strong iodine navel dip
- Needles 16g 1", 18g 1", 19g 1" and 21g 0.5"
- Syringes 50,10,5,and2ml
- Themometer
- Dopram lamb revival drops for use under the tongue.
- 40% Dextrose/glucose injection (for intra peritoneal injection).

STOMACH TUBING LAMBS

This is a well tolerated routine procedure ideal for ensuring adequate colostrum intake in the vital 6 to 8hrs of life.

As long as the lamb has a swallowing reflex and the tube (lubricated) is introduced slowly and centrally in the mouth there is little chance of it going down the airway. The tube can often be seen and felt going down the correct way on the left side of the neck. Also if the tube can introduced to a point where only 3 or 4" remain it must be correct as airway introduction blocks complete passage.

COLOSTRUM

Adequate colostrum intake is the single most important event in lamb survival and resistance to subsequent challenges.

A lamb will naturally drink 500ml to a litre of colostrum in the first 24 hrs but as little as 200 to 250 ml may be adequate if the colostrum or colostrum substitute has suitable antibody (IgG) and fat levels.

Fresh or frozen (thaw slowly) ewe colostrum is ideal. If not available then a powdered substitute can help. There are many on the market and it is important not just to select on price and how easily they dissolve. Aim for a powder that provides around 3g of antibodies (IgG) per dose with a fat level of 20%. The powders that dissolve easily often have lower fat levels as it is the fat content that limits solubility. Cow colostrum can also be used as it provides good fat levels but doesn't provide antibody immunity to clostridial /pasteurella diseases unless the cow has been vaccinated with Heptavac P.

(The vaccination protocol for a cow would be to give 10ml 3months, 1 month and 2 weeks before calving and to collect and freeze the first milk.)

NAVEL DIPPING/SPRAYING

When lambing inside antiseptic protection of the wet navel immediately after birth is vital. It has been found that dipping rather than spraying strong iodine offers the best protection, and that this is superior and cheaper to using antibiotic sprays.

INTRAPERITONEAL GLUCOSE/DEXTROSE INJECTION

This may sound rather a scary procedure but is actually very straightforward and lifesaving in the collapsed hypothermic lamb too flat to stomach tube.

The glucose/dextrose preparations come as a 40% solution and need to be diluted down to 20% half and half with boiled water. This also has the effect of warming the solution to the collect temperature for injection.

Hold the lamb up by the front legs (with someone holding the back legs to prevent kicking) and having drawn up 20 ml of 40% dextrose and 20 ml boiled water in a 50 ml syringe with a 19 g 1" needle inject the lamb through the stomach wall pointing slightly downwards at a point 2cm to the side of and 2cm below the navel. Give a long acting antibiotic injection.

If you have a non responsive, collapsed lamb this can only be of benefit.

Now you're all prepared and ready to go - have good lambing time.

Mike Davis, *BVScCert, SAO, MRCVS*